

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing below of the claims presents in amended form claims 1 through 11 that were presented in the international phase of the corresponding PCT application, along with new claim 12. The following claims replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the present application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A ceramic heat conductor support disc for supporting an electrical heating element for electrically heated furnace installations, said support disc ~~having a centre~~ comprising: a disc body having a predetermined thickness; a center aperture (2) having a central axis lying parallel to ~~the~~ a longitudinal axis of the disc body and of a heating element ~~and ; at least one or more apertures (3, 6, 10-15)~~ intermediate aperture located between said ~~centre~~ center aperture (2) and ~~the~~ an outer periphery (4) of the disc (1), ~~characterized in, that~~ body; wherein the disc (1) ~~is provided with~~ includes at least one or more elongated openings ~~(5,7,8,9,16,17)~~ running opening extending from said periphery (4) to at least one ~~or through one or more of said intermediate apertures (3, 6, 10-15) and/or the centre aperture (2), where ; wherein~~ each elongated opening ~~penetrates~~ extends through the ~~whole~~ entire thickness of said disc (1) ; and wherein the number of elongated openings is less than the number of intermediate apertures.

Claim 2 (currently amended): ~~Disc according to~~ A support disc in accordance with claim 1, ~~characterized in, that the length of said~~ wherein the at least one elongated

opening (5,7,8,9,16,17) ~~is limited to the~~ has a length that is less than a maximum radius of the disc (4) body.

Claim 3 (currently amended): ~~Disc according to~~ A support disc in accordance with claim 1 or 2, ~~characterized in, that said~~ , wherein the at least one elongated opening (5,7) ~~runs~~ extends along the a radius of said disc (4) body.

Claim 4 (currently amended): ~~Disc according to~~ A support disc in accordance with claim 1 or 2, ~~characterized in, that said~~ , wherein the at least one elongated opening (8,9,16,17) ~~runs in another direction than along the radius~~ extends in a non-radial direction relative to the center of said disc (4) body.

Claim 5 (currently amended): ~~Disc according to~~ A support disc in accordance with claim 1, 2, 3 or 4, ~~characterized in, that the width of~~ wherein the at least one elongated opening (5,7,8,9,16,17) ~~is upwards limited to the maximum diameter of the aperture (3,6, 10-15) and/or the centre aperture (2), in which it ends~~ has a width that is smaller than a width of an aperture.

Claim 6 (currently amended): ~~Disc according to~~ A support disc in accordance with claim 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5, ~~characterized in, that the~~ wherein the at least one elongated opening (5,7,8,9,16,17) ~~has the same~~ a constant width , ~~or a width that varies, over the length of said elongated opening~~.

Claim 7 (currently amended): ~~Disc according to~~ A support disc in accordance with claim 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6, characterized in, that said wherein the at least one elongated opening (5,7,8,9) ends in the centre terminates at the center aperture (2).

Claim 8 (currently amended): ~~Disc according to~~ A support disc in accordance with claim 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7, characterised in, that there are two or more of said wherein the disc includes a plurality of elongated openings (16, 17) in the disc (1).

Claim 9 (currently amended): ~~Disc according to~~ A support disc in accordance with claim 8, characterized in, that the including a plurality of intermediate apertures (3,6,10-15) and wherein the intermediate apertures are located asymmetrical asymmetrally over a surface of the disc surface.

Claim 10 (currently amended): ~~Disc according to any of claims 1-9, characterized in, that said centre~~ A support disc in accordance with claim 1, wherein the center aperture (2) and said the intermediate apertures (3,6,10-15) have an elliptical shape.

Claim 11 (currently amended): ~~Disc according to any of claims 1-9, characterized in, that said centre~~ A support disc in accordance with claim 1, wherein the center aperture (2) and said the intermediate apertures (3,6,10-15) have a circular shape.

Claim 12 (new): A support disc in accordance with claim 1, wherein the at least one elongated opening extends from an outwardly-positioned intermediate aperture to an inwardly-positioned intermediate aperture, relative to the disc periphery.

Claim 13 (new): A support disc in accordance with claim 1, wherein the at least one elongated opening has a width that varies along the length of the elongated opening.